

VZCZCXRO2958
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #1850 1710841
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 190841Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7872
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001850

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/19/2018
TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER TU IZ
SUBJECT: RRT ERBIL: DOHUK'S PESHMERGA AND ASAYEESH
COMMANDERS DESCRIBE RELATIONS WITH TURKISH MILITARY,
MEASURES AGAINST PKK

Classified By: RRT Coordinator Jess Baily for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

This is an Erbil Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) message.
¶1. (C/NF) RRTOff and the MNC-I Liaison Officer to the KRG met on June 15 in Dohuk City with General Sheikh Ali, commander of approximately 30,000 peshmerga soldiers located in Dohuk province. General Ali's forces are also stationed in the disputed territories under peshmerga security control that stretch from the Qandil Mountains through Sinjar District of Ninewa province. Ali said his command maintains "a good relationship" with Turkish forces stationed in Dohuk province. He said, "there is close coordination between us. We have an office at Bamarne Air Base where Turkish military forces are located, and we exchange information often. Even when the Turks rotate their forces in and out, they inform us first."

¶2. (C) Ali said KRG leaders have formally asked the GOI to commence negotiations with the GOT to enable the complete withdrawal of Turkish forces from Dohuk province. He said many families in Dohuk would return to their villages near the Turkish border to resume farming activities, if Turkish forces would withdraw from their positions in Dohuk and cease their attacks on PKK targets in the province. While Ali looks forward to the day when Turkish military forces leave Dohuk, he concluded that this would only occur "when the Government of Iraq decides to do something about it."

¶3. (C) With regard to the PKK terrorist group, Ali said, "we have taken some actions to prevent villagers from dealing with the PKK. We have ordered the inhabitants of border villages to transport northward through our checkpoints only the food the villagers can consume themselves." Ali stated that PKK forces sometimes steal food from villagers within his area of protection. As an example of this activity, he said PKK forces recently stole several sheep from Arab shepherds in the Akre District of Ninewa province. Ali reiterated the KRG's oft-repeated claim, however, that "their (PKK) main sources of supply are villages inside Turkey."

¶4. (C) In a separate meeting, Dohuk Asayesh (security police) chief Saeed Singari said his officers "are taking strong efforts to ensure that no one in Dohuk supports (PKK terrorists operating on the border)." He explained that Asayesh recently arrested two men in Dohuk who were trying to supply the PKK with support materials. Without offering further detail, he said the men were charged and their cases are now in court. (NOTE: RRT is seeking to find out more information about this case.)

BUTENIS